

THIRTIETH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION.

Ex. Doc. No. 65.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

LETTER CARRIERS—OF FEES.

LETTER

FROM THE

POSTMASTER GENERAL.

Transmitting, in compliance with a resolution of the House of the 28th of February last, information relative to the reduction of the fees of letter carriers in the cities of the United States.

MARCH 2, 1849.

Laid upon the table, and ordered to be printed.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
March 2, 1849.

SIR: In compliance with the resolution of the House of the 28th of February, requesting the Postmaster General to communicate to the House "the reasons for reducing the fees of letter carriers in the cities of the United States, if the same has been done, when and where such reduction was made, the order issued thereupon, how long the former rates has been paid, and the rates now paid," I have the honor to communicate a copy of the order, and the letter of instructions to the postmaster at New York, which will explain the regulations adopted for that city. Similar regulations have been enforced in Philadelphia and Boston, but have not been extended as yet to the other cities of the Union; the former compensation allowed letter carriers was two cents for the delivery of each, and is presumed to have been the same since the passage of the act of 1825. The present compensation is one cent for each letter. The reasons for the adoption of the regulations were—

1st. That it was ascertained that many of the letter carriers in the cities received large sums, much beyond a reasonable and fair compensation for the service performed.

2d. The compensation of the letter carriers, added to the drop letter postage, had the effect of throwing the city correspondence into the hands of express men.

3d. Such encouragement to expresses diverted much of the correspondence between different cities from the mails into their hands.

4th. Propositions had been submitted to the department for the performance of such service at one cent on each letter.

5th. It was believed that one cent would yield a fair and reasonable compensation to those employed in the service.

6th. That by such a course, the city correspondence would be enlarged and placed under the control of the post office, the expresses discouraged if not altogether broke down, and the legitimate business of the post office performed by its agents.

I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,
C. JOHNSON.

To the SPEAKER
of the House of Representatives.

DECEMBER 21, 1848.

By direction of the Postmaster General, I enclose you herewith the copy of an order to go into effect on the 1st January, 1849.

W. J. BROWN,
2d Assistant P. M. G.

POSTMASTER,
New York city.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
December 21, 1848.

It is ordered, that Aaron Swartz be appointed a letter carrier for so much of the city of New York as lies within the following bounds, to wit: All north of Chambers and Rosevelt streets, and a line connecting them; and that Boyd be appointed a letter carrier for all south of said Chambers and Rosevelt streets, and a line connecting them; that all letters for delivery within said bounds be handed over by the postmaster of the city of New York to said letter carriers for delivery, except such as the persons to whom they are addressed may have requested in writing, addressed to the postmaster, to be retained in the post office, and the said carriers will receive the same and pay the postage thereon, or make such deposits as shall be satisfactory to the postmaster, and deliver the same as soon thereafter as practicable, after the opening of the mails at the office; said delivery to be made not less than twice

each day in every part of the district above described, and oftener if necessary, in such parts of the district as may be convenient to the city post office, and for each letter coming through the mails, and so delivered, the carriers may receive one cent from the person to whom it is delivered, for each newspaper or pamphlet $\frac{1}{2}$ cent, and for each drop letter so delivered, the carriers will collect two cents and retain one cent for the delivery thereof, and the other cent to be paid to the city post office as a part of its revenue. Any letters so delivered and paid for by said carriers, which shall not be delivered because the person addressed cannot be found, or refuses to receive, shall be returned to the city post office, and the amount of money paid shall be returned to the carrier. That it shall be the duty of said carrier to have boxes prepared for the reception and collection of letters for the city post office, at his own expense, at such places as shall be approved of by the city post master, having at least one in every ward in the city, and to take all letters deposited in the boxes to the city post office in time for the outgoing mails, not less than twice each day from every ward in the city, and oftener, if the same shall be deemed necessary, and the said carriers shall be authorized to receive from each person so depositing their letters, one cent for each letter, which shall be all the compensation to which he is entitled, and in case of letters sent from one part of the city to the other, the carrier collecting said letters and depositing them in the city post office may receive from the person so forwarding their letters one cent for delivery in the city post office, and the carrier taking such letters from the post office and delivering the same in other parts of the city shall receive one cent, which shall be in lieu of the drop letter postage, provided that a letter carrier, when such letters are collected in his own district for delivery in the same, shall charge therefor but one cent, and may deliver the same without taking it into the post office; and that it shall be the duty of said letter carriers and collectors of letters to deliver into the city post office all letters that are to go out of said city to any other place, and they shall not be in any wise directly or indirectly connected with any express taking packages or letters to or from the city.

That said letter carriers, and all persons employed by them, shall give bond and security, and take the oath for the faithful performance of their duties, as required by the 41st section of the act of March 3, 1836.

To take effect the 1st of January next.

C. J.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
December 26, 1848.

SIR: I have received your letter of the 24th instant. The arrangement not being accepted by the parties named in a copy of an order which I proposed to make, and which I caused to be enclosed to you on Thursday last, and the proposition of your letter

carriers being now sent to me and under consideration, I feel satisfied that the whole business of the city post deliveries should be under the charge of one man as a separate business. I therefore desire—

1. That the letter carrying be placed in the hands of Mr. Boyd, Mr. Swartz, and your present letter carriers, respectively, at the rate of one cent for each letter delivered, one cent for each letter taken to your office to be mailed, and one cent for each letter transported from one part of the city to another without going through the post office, in each case to be paid by the person sending or receiving the same.

2. That you select out of the persons above named and referred to, who is best qualified for it by his knowledge, activity, and the public confidence in him, to take the superintending charge of the business, and assign him a room in the post office building. He is to arrange the beats, providing one for Mr. Boyd, for each of the present letter carriers, and for Mr. Swartz, taking charge of the residue of the city himself; all to be done subject to your approval. This business is to be done without charge to the department; that is, neither the compensation of the one cent per letter to be paid by the parties, and two deliveries and two collections a day are to be made. Postage on letters to be paid you, and a refunding allowed where not delivered.

You will report to me the person you have selected, and require him to furnish me with his arrangement of beats, to be forwarded through you. Also furnish the names of all who come into the arrangement, with their districts, respectively, that new bonds may be issued, and that the service may be reduced into operation at the earliest day thereafter practicable.

C. JOHNSON.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
December 26, 1848.

Modify proposed order of 21st December, so as to place the letter carrying business in the hands of Mr. Boyd, Mr. Swartz, and the present letter carriers, respectively. Authorize postmaster of New York to select one of the above as a superintending letter carrier, giving to each of the others a beat, and retaining the residue of the city to himself; all to be arranged subject to approval of the postmaster of the city; and the whole expense to be covered by the one cent per letter, to be paid by the parties in each case. The selection of the superintendent and the arrangements to be reported, that new bonds may be issued and the service ordered into operation at the earliest practicable day.

C. J.